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OPERATIONAL ART IN COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN PLANNING

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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Abstract of

OPERATIONAL ART IN COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Unprofessional failure. These words best describe the eleven counterinsurgency actions that the United States has been involved during this century. Today the Unified Commander-in-Chief (CINC), in conjunction with the Country Team, faces the daunting task of developing a successful campaign plan for c[illegible]urgency consistent with U.S. interests. The operational commander in counterinsurgency efforts in support of an ally or in support of regional stability is the key link between the strategic and tactical levels.

Looking at previous counterinsurgencies for guidance is a bit like the fable of the six blind men describing the elephant, all were partially right in their interpretations of what they experienced, and all were wrong in that none was able to describe an animal he had never seen. The most striking single characteristic of insurgencies is their dissimilarity. Critical analysis of two recent counterinsurgency operations in El Salvador and Peru can provide lessons learned and contemplation for U.S. counterinsurgency campaign planners in the future.

Operational art and campaign planning in counterinsurgency can provide a logical, rigorous, and coherent method for linking all elements of American power in pursuit of national interests.

Unprofessional failure. Although the roots of American strategic culture are firmly grounded in insurgency and counterinsurgency warfare that predate Nathaniel Greene's successful campaign in the Carolinas during the American Revolution, all eleven U S counterinsurgency efforts in this century have gone adrift in a sea of unprofessionalism.[1] Clausewitz in On War states:

> "...the most far reaching act of judgement that statesman and commander has to make is to establish (understand) the kind of war in which they are embarking, neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into something that is alien to its nature."[2]

Majestic memorials of U.S. military campaigns in state versus state warfare, indicative of our ability to fight other nations, stand in every city and town in our land. Unfortunately, less visible, less stirring are the monuments to our campaigns against nonstate actors. Frustrated by the historically inconclusive outcome of the Vietnam War, the American military has all but turned its back on the critical study and preparation for counterinsurgency. This fact has been masked somewhat by the celebrated analysis of the Vietnam War by Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., of the Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College.[3] Billed as the first true analysis of the war, Summers' account viewed the entire war as it ended - a conventional invasion of South Vietnam by North Vietnam. He ignored the revolutionary basis for the war as well as the guerrilla tactics and insurgent

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[1] Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, **U S Low Intensity Conflicts 1899-1990**, U S Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., September 1990, p. 47.

[2] Carl von Clausewitz, **On War**, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1976, p. 88.

[3] Harry G. Summers, Jr., **On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context**, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., Strategic Studies Institute, 1981.

strategies used, even by regular forces during much of the war. Despite this lack of critical analysis, strategy, doctrine and lessons learned sufficiently endure that emphasize the political nature of counterinsurgency, the need to focus on underlying causes rather than military manifestations and the need for an indirect U.S. role.

Lessons learned by the U.S. Marine Corps in the early part of this century in operations in Panama (1901-14), Cuba (1906-09), China (1912-41), Haiti (1915-34), Dominican Republic (1916-24) and Nicaragua (1926-33) were published in their **Small Wars Manual** (SWM) in 1940. The operational commander today who adheres to Clausewitz and lessons codified in the Marines SWM can link the application of military force to the desired policy outcome. This paper uses the insurgencies of the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) in Peru and the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front) in El Salvador as case studies to demonstrate the validity and utility of operational art as it applies to the design and execution of a counterinsurgency campaign plan. It will examine both insurgencies and discuss the operational imperatives and dilemmas of counterinsurgency campaign planning.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The term counterinsurgency has evolved to describe the environment of unstable peace throughout a gamut of diplomatic, economic, judicial, informational, and military activities at the lower end of the conflict spectrum. The political aims of the insurgents (that need to be countered), are to accomplish unlimited political objectives without resorting to a large scale war and to avoid the commitment of U.S. troops against them. Counterinsurgency defines an environment where civilian agencies play the principal role and

where the military plays an active, but supporting role.[4] Counterinsurgency, as defined by JCS Pub 1-02, is "those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency."[5]

INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

Although known by other names, insurgency is documented as early as the fifteenth century B.C. The Bible, in the Book of Judges, records classic examples of insurgency warfare. Using darkness and surprise, Gideon led a small, hand-picked group of Israelites against a much larger Midianite army, forcing them to abandon their camps and flee to the hills. Before and after Christ's birth, Jews repeatedly conducted insurgency warfare against a well-organized Roman army using small bands of raiding parties. History shows that insurgencies arise from such causes as political differences in Oman (1965-75), Algeria (1954-62) and Malaya (1948-60); lawlessness in Kenya (1952-60); social and economic injustices in the Congo (1960-64); and ethnic and religious animosities in Lebanon.

British success in Malaya, French military success in Algeria, and the Philippine government's success against the Huk insurgency were due in large part to successful fusion of all forms of government power - political, military, economic, judicial and informational. U.S. involvement in counterinsurgency in this century includes insurgencies arising from anti-colonialism in the Philippines (1899-1913) and in Indochina (1946-54); ideology

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[4] United States Department of Defense, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict, "Low Intensity Conflict Status Report to Congress," April 23, 1992, p. 4.

[5] Howard Lee Dixon, Low Intensity Conflict Overview, Definitions, and Policy Concerns, (Langley Air Force Base, Va.: Army-Air Force Center For Low Intensity Conflict, 1989), p. 29.

differences in Greece (1946-49); reform movements in the Philippines (1946-53), Guatemala (1965-1974), Thailand (1965-85), El Salvador (1979-92), and again in the Philippines (1984-present); reunification in Laos (1955-65) and Vietnam (1955-65); and based on social and economic injustices in the Congo (1960-64).[6] The opposition typically encountered by counterinsurgency forces consists of scattered bands of irregular troops, often well-armed and extremely mobile. Today, even in Third World countries, planes and helicopters face a plethora of anti-air(AA) systems including ZSU 23-4 AA guns, hand held SA-7 (Grail) and our own Redeye or Stinger AA missile systems. Today's barefoot, poorly clothed, lightly armed guerrilla fighter carries a highly sophisticated and lethal shoulder fired surface-to-air missile along with his AK-47 assault rifle.

STRATEGY AND DOCTRINE

The measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and to protect itself against subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency should be based on the nation's Internal Defense and Development Strategy (IDAD). Foreign Internal Defense (FID) is the use of U.S. military resources in support of another nation's counterinsurgency operations. FID involves government agencies, both civilian and military in any of the programs the supported government undertakes as part of the IDAD to protect its citizens.[7] When the U.S. supports a counterinsurgency, it combines a program of balanced political, economic, judicial and social development with defense against insurgent violence. Military and police action

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[6] Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, **U.S. Low Intensity Conflicts 1899-1900**, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington,D.C., September 1990, p.47.

[7] Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Operations, FM 100-5**, Washington, D.C., 14 June 1993, p. 13-7.

provide the necessary degree of security so development can occur. **Direct operations** would involve combat engagements against insurgents as in Vietnam. Much more likely would be **indirect operations** in support of the friendly government such as security assistance training, mobile training teams and logistical support to help the supported nation develop a needed capability. Direct assistance **not** direct operations includes providing assistance such as intelligence sharing, communications support, humanitarian assistance, providing air traffic control, servicing supply and maintenance facilities and civic action programs that could include: building roads, running hospitals and medical facilities, rudimentary construction, repair of public facilities and installing communication systems.

CHAPTER II

EL SALVADOR

The insurgency in El Salvador is a function of social and economic problems that date back to the nineteenth century when the struggle for arable land created a class of ruling landowners and a class of subjugated peasants (campesinos) who worked, but did not own the land. Until the mid-twentieth century, the landowners were concerned almost exclusively with their own economic well-being, and had little concern for the relative poverty of the campesinos. The campesinos, with no economic or political power, had no means of redress for their grievances.[8]

In 1972 the national election was stopped by the military and the landowners when it became clear that their selected candidate did not have the necessary votes. With an increasing loss of faith in the democratic process as the solution to their problems, the campesinos, labor unions and students resorted to violence to bring attention to their demands. Governmental response was further repression, more violence, and the spread of death via right-wing death squads. Violence perpetrated by both the left and the right continued throughout the seventies, and toward the end of the decade various insurgent groups began to consolidate their efforts.[9] In 1980, the groups joined together to form political and military wings that could control insurgent operations. The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), the military wing, and the Democratic Revolutionary

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[8] Cynthia Arnson, **El Salvador - A Revolution Confronts the United States**, Washington D.C., Institute for Policy Studies, 1982, p. 12.

[9] Colonel John D. Waghelstein, **El Salvador: Observations and Experiences in Counterinsurgency**, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., U S Army War College, 1985, p. 85.

Front (FDR), the political wing, would cooperate under the controlling Unified Revolutionary Directorate (DRU). The stated aim of the DRU were the overthrow of the Salvadoran government.[10]

The role of the U.S. military in El Salvador's counterinsurgency effort increased significantly after the guerrillas' offensive in January 1981 failed. The outgoing Carter administration increased the amount of non-lethal aid, resumed military aid, and began sending advisers and equipment to assist the Salvadoran military.[11] The Woerner Report, a November 1981 study, identified problems in the Salvadoran armed forces that could be solved with U.S. assistance. A (counterinsurgent campaign) plan based on the Weorner Report was developed and implemented by the U.S. Military Group (MilGrp) in El Salvador that focused on developing a higher level of "military competence and professionalism in a counterinsurgency environment".[12]

Military training by U.S. forces and providing western military equipment were part of the solution. The other part of the solution, the **political part**, was the Salvadoran National Campaign Plan created with the assistance of the U.S. Military Group and the U.S. Embassy.[13] The National Campaign Plan had four basic tenets: 1) agrarian reform; 2) increased employment; 3) restoration of vital services and infrastructure; and 4) humanitarian

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[10] Stephen Blank, et al, Responding to Low Intensity Conflict Challenges, Air University Press, Maxwell Air Force Base, 1990, p. 147.

[11] Arnson, p. 69.

[12] Waghelstein, p. 36.

[13] Ibid., p. 52.

assistance.[14] As the plan was put into action in 1982 and 1983, the Salvadoran army began to show improved performance as a result of U.S. training and assistance.

Initially, the Salvadoran military forces were neither organized, equipped nor trained for counterinsurgency operations. Their conventional operations were ineffective at preventing the destruction of economic infrastructure by the insurgents and did little to hinder the expansion of the guerrillas. The U.S. Military Group at the Embassy continued to provide proposals not only to improve the training of the armed forces, but recommendations that covered the spectrum of military operations. The Salvadoran military's counterinsurgent campaign plan in support of the National Campaign Plan needed to produce the following conditions: 1) establish a viable counterinsurgency force; 2) safeguard the economic infrastructure of the country; and 3) build a positive image of the government among the people.[15]

Assistance by the U.S. military achieved a more viable counterinsurgency force. Training by Navy SEAL team members for Naval units focused on coastline protection and surveillance while U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers and U.S. Marines emphasized small-unit tactics and patrolling for Army units.[16] This training succeeded in improving the Salvadoran military's effectiveness in monitoring guerrilla activities and resupply capabilities, but it did not compensate for a weakness in Civil Defense at the local village level. The government was unwilling to organize, train and equip local Civil Defense forces because the

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[14] Ibid., p. 52.

[15] Ibid., p. 41.

[16] Ibid., p. 47.

"military tended to distrust the villagers who were to form (local) patrols.[17] El Salvador's failure to fully integrate the military campaign plan with the judicial or police campaign plan destined the National Campaign Plan to be only marginally successful.

Beginning with the **Woerner Report**, the **operational imperatives** necessary **for successful counterinsurgency** efforts in El Salvador began to take shape. The MilGrp **identified the strategic aim** - elimination of conditions conducive to violence and instability - and the **culminating point** - when the root causes of the insurgency - repression, poverty and corruption - are eliminated. **Unity of effort** was enhanced **by the MilGrp**, together **with the staff of the U.S. Embassy**, and their assistance to **the host nation** in **developing both a National and Military Campaign Plan.** When the people began to believe that the military could protect them and the vital services in the countryside from the insurgents, the **legitimacy of the government** (the friendly center of gravity) was no longer a weakness. **Operational dilemmas** were present in the Congressionally mandated adviser limit and ever present funding questions for military assistance. However, funding for assistance also provided the U.S. with **leverage** to encourage the **reforms** necessary to achieve the **strategic aim** and the **culminating point**. With **increased restraint** by the military and **perseverance** by the government the war stalemated in the mid-eighties. Negotiations to bring the insurgents into the political process began in 1984 and a peace agreement was signed in 1992. Progress has been made and continues toward the **culminating point.**

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[17] Suzanne M. Heigh, **Counterinsurgency Strategies for Effective Conflict Termination: U S Strategies in El Salvador,** Defense Technical Information Center, Alexandria, Va., 1990, p. 150.

CHAPTER III

PERU

A cursory analysis of Peruvian society reveals a country that is an insurgent's dream, a textbook example of the accelerators necessary to mobilize a population against its government. Economic crisis, lack of legitimacy of the current regime, a fragmented society with a history of racial problems and human rights abuses, lack infrastructure in the countryside, disease, unemployment nearly out of control, and a large, geographically isolated rural area long neglected by the country's ruling elites all provide fertile soil for insurgency's roots to flourish and prosper. Centuries of government neglect of the Andean highlands and the eastern jungle regions, the problems the government faces and a history of racial and geographic conflict -- urban-rural, coastal-interior, and White-Mestizo-Indians -- cannot be corrected without a viable economy necessary to support massive reforms. The major threat to internal security and democracy in Peru is not the Sendero Luminoso (SL or Shining Path) founded in 1970 by Abimael Guzman, professor at the National University in Ayacucho[18], but the peril of a government that doesn't function.

The significance of Peru to U.S. foreign policy is the coca leaf, President Fujimori's self-coup, and the possibility of national disintegration. The problem of cocaine cannot be separated from SL. It protects coca processing labs, allocates land, dictates prices for coca

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[18] Gordon H. McCormick, **The Shining Path and the Future of Peru**, RAND publication, March 1990, p. 3.

leaf, takes its share and negotiates and sells directly to the Columbian cartels.[19] The national aim (**strategic aim**) of the Peruvian government is incorrectly directed toward defeating the Sendero insurgency by 1995 and to protect the national identity of the country rather than to **change**, by eliminating the root causes of the insurgency. The current strategy is based upon the principle that there is both a military and political solution to the insurgency.[20] President Fujimori has outlined a series of programs to achieve that goal. The Peruvian government has willingly turned over its counterinsurgency efforts to its military and the military attempts to solve with military means a military, political and economic problem.

The national campaign plan drafted by the Joint Command, an advisory group of the chiefs of staff of the three services, is being implemented by the armed forces of Peru, the National Police, which includes the government's counterterrorism office (DIRCOTE) (who captured Guzman in September 1992) and civilian defense organizations. The objective of Fujimori's counterinsurgency plan is to protect key political targets and engage Sendero in the field.[21] It intends to establish the following conditions: economic development designed to stimulate rural investment; raise local living conditions; and establish political conditions that enhance confidence in the government's legitimacy. Although the principles

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[19] Bernard W. Aronson, Asst. Sec. for Inter-American Affairs, Dept of State, "Statement," House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, **The Threat of the Shining Path to Democracy in Peru,** Hearings 12 March 1992, (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.), p.123.

[20] Dr. Donald E. Schulz and Dr. Gariella Marcella, **Strategy for Peru, A Political-Military Dialogue,** Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., June 11, 1992, p. 2.

[21] McCormick, p. 31.

underlying this effort are sound, most of these programs are foundering or have been abandoned, either defeated by the sheer magnitude of the problem, widespread corruption, poor organization, the ongoing economic crisis or the Peruvian military's unwillingness to tolerate civilian interference.

Despite the capture of Guzman, the Sendero's center of gravity and despite the lack of insurgent coordination due to the cellular structure of the Sendero, the implementation of the Peruvian government's counterinsurgency plan will in all likelihood fail. The government's **unity of effort** remains vested solely in the military. Once the army moves into an area, it is an independent actor, answering only its chain of command. Trained and equipped by the Soviet Union, the army does not understand the dimensions of the problem it faces nor the principles of counterinsurgency. It lacks sufficient means to conduct a successful unconventional campaign and has an officer corps that shares the racial biases of the country's upper class.[22] Peruvian army thinking is dominated by the "threat" of a two front war against Ecuador and Chile and is ill-prepared to face the SL. The government lacks a national intelligence fusion cell to systematically mobilize a coordinated, effective intelligence effort, little ability to react to SL actions, a marked inability to sustain units in the field and no cadre of troops capable of unconventional, small unit tactics.[23] Nor is there any reason to believe that the army is willing or able to reorganize itself into an effective counterinsurgency force.[24]

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[22] Ibid., p. 33.

[23] Ibid., p. 35.

[24] Ibid., p. 37.

Despite the development of a national campaign plan and the fact that Fujimori has brought inflation under control, the police lack restraint. They have failed to reform and have yet to learn the basic lesson that respecting human rights is fundamental to establishing legitimacy to the government. The strategic aim should be the combined socioeconomic, political, historical, and cultural problems that plague Peru. The government is responding in a purely military manner, failing to achieve unity of effort. A pragmatic economic counteroffensive must be attempted. The police and armed forces must be organized, trained and equipped to undertake counterinsurgency operations. Unlike the U.S. government, Peru does not place the same priority on the Andean Strategy/Drug War.

Unlike El Salvador where the U.S. had leverage (aid programs) over human rights and military operations, a substantive security assistance program in Peru does not exist. The U.S. military is virtually powerless to influence the Peruvian government and military.

With Guzman's capture, the lack of coherent leadership may cause the Sendero to lose its popular support. Until the government of Peru solves the root causes of poverty and social ills that plague the country, the latent potential for insurgency remains. The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) another major guerrila organization has been active in Peru since the mid 1980s, Peru is locked in a death struggle between democracy and a brutal totalitarian regime. The threat to Peru is more a matter of the government losing than the Sendero or the MRTA winning.

CHAPTER IV

OPERATIONAL IMPERATIVES IN COUNTERINSURGENCY

Counterinsurgency is a foreign policy problem that requires support from many agencies and departments within the U.S. government. Although there seems to be a natural tendency to turn to the military when faced with a counterinsurgency challenge, the military has neither the tools nor the perspective to accomplish the entire integrated task. Established at the National Security Council staff level is the Board for Low Intensity Conflict, intended to provide the NSC and the President with coordinated advice, its permanent members include State, CIA, Treasury, Commerce, Justice, U.S. Information Agency and DOD.

The Campaign Plan

The operational commander in counterinsurgency efforts in support of an ally or in support of regional stability is the link between the strategic and tactical levels. "The role of the CINC is critical. His regional perspective is at the operational level of the conflict. In conjunction and coordination with the country teams, the CINC identifies and applies military and certain humanitarian and civic action resources to achieve U.S. goals. With proper and timely employment, these resources minimize the likelihood for need of U.S. combat involvement."[25] His task is to translate strategic goal into tactical actions by developing a campaign plan, the key to accomplishing successful counterinsurgency operations consistent with U.S. interests. The counterinsurgency campaign is planned with the same degree of resolute purpose as if planning combat operations. Military support activities, not intended

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[25] JCS Pub 3-07, Doctrine for Joint Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1989, p. II-10.

"to provide for" but "to improve" the host nation's own capabilities to resolve "their problems and provide for their citizens," are employed instead of combat operations. The operational commander must take care not to undermine the credibility of the host nation and present it with a sovereignty issue by assuming that country's role as the U.S. did in Vietnam.[26]

To support U.S. regional policy, the operational commander will provide supporting plans and coordinate with the plans developed by the U.S. Ambassador and his country team to achieve U.S. regional goals. Vital planning criteria often overlooked are the national counterinsurgency plan and the military strategy of the allied government. Military action, at any level, must ultimately serve the demands of policy. The rationale for campaign planning in both conventional warfighting and in counterinsurgency environments is a rigorous, coherent, rational method for the application of resources in pursuit of national interests and the primacy of the political objective.[27] In both the goal of planning is to expand control of the conflict - to integrate diverse factors and phase actions into the future. There are however, key differences. The most striking is the theory of victory, strategic aim and conflict termination.

Theory of Victory and Strategic Aim

Summers states in On Strategy that tactical success on the battlefield was not enough to guarantee victory in Vietnam. While the Clausewitzian imperative of political objectives

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[26] General George A. Joulwan, U.S. Army, "Operations Other Than War, A CINC's Perspective" **Military Review**, February 1994, p. 7.

[27] Richard H. Taylor and John D. McDowell, "Low-Intensity Campaigns," **Military Review**, March 1988, p.5.

holds true in counterinsurgency, the defeat of enemy armed forces does not automatically lead to the attainment of the political objective and termination of the conflict. Instead, the key is the eradication of conditions conducive to violence and instability. In all cases, political, psychological, judicial and economic methods must be fully integrated with military force.[28]

The campaign planner must identify the source and causes of instability in the region, the viability and worthiness of the government in the country facing the insurgency, and the nature of the insurgency itself. This requires an understanding of the society in which the insurgency exists, a keen political sense and the maintenance of a long-term geo-political perspective.

Unlike conventional campaign planning, in counterinsurgency the mission is derived from an analysis of the situation. The U.S. strategic aim in a counterinsurgent campaign always include stability, the promotion of democracy, human rights, and free enterprise; they may include protection of basing rights, access to resources and investments.[29]

Culminating Point

U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 100-20 and Air Force Pamphlet (AFP) 3-20 both stress that the end state of an insurgency is reached when a foreign government establishes legitimacy and when the root causes of the insurgency - poverty, corruption, repression, and inequity - are eliminated. Outright victory in these terms is rare, and stalemate is common.

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[28] Steven Metz, "Counterinsurgent Campaign Planning," **Parameters**, September 1989, p. 61.

[29] Ibid., p. 63.

A negotiated compromise between the government and the insurgent, rather than the absolute terms (eliminated) established in FM 100-20 and AFP 3-20, could be the operational commander's culminating point.

Unity of Effort not Unity of Command

If the aim is to achieve the national purpose politically, it naturally follows that the economic, informational and military instruments of national power must be used in harmony with that goal. U.S. military forces committed to counterinsurgency efforts will not generally be designated the lead agency in attaining U.S. national policy objectives. Command authority over nonmilitary agencies is not extended in times of peace or war for U.S. forces. Most often, other U.S. agencies will have the lead in counterinsurgency operations and will be supported with U.S. military resources as was the case in El Salvador.[30] Although not in command, it is imperative that the military understands and supports the U.S. Ambassador and the country team, which is the lead agency. Common understanding and commitment of purpose, clarity and focus, by all U.S. agencies, government and non-government, provide the synergistic effect to achieve U.S. national policy goals. With the inter-agency involvement necessary for success in counterinsurgency and the involvement of Congress in foreign policy and budget issues, command and control must come from Washington.

Besides El Salvador, for the U.S. a key model is the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program instituted in Vietnam in 1967. This program formally integrated military and civilian efforts under a single chain of command to

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[30] Joulwan, p. 8.

conduct counterinsurgency and "nation building" operations in Vietnam. With combined authority at all levels, this relationship was one of true equality, some regions had a military director with a civilian aide, other regions had the opposite. While **this degree of civil-military integration alters the role of the CINC**, it facilitates campaign planning while there is still time in the growth of the insurgency to tip the scales and prevent U.S. forces from being involved.[31]

Additional friction in the command and control problem is present when the sensibilities of the host nation are considered. The principle of unity of command would dictate that the host nation control the allied effort. However, until Congress mandated the limited level of U.S. effort in El Salvador, when the United States intervened in a counterinsurgency effort, it quickly became the dominant partner and acted the part. In Vietnam the allied command and control issue between the U.S. and South Vietnamese was never resolved, causing an uneasy alliance until the end. Unity of effort, **not** unity of command is the key principle that must be followed in counterinsurgency.

Legitimacy

This is the **friendly center of gravity** in counterinsurgency operations. Political, economic, informational and military actions should all be aimed at enhancing the legitimacy of the allied government and undermining that of the insurgents. It is imperative that U.S. operations in support of a host nation do not undermine the credibility of the host nation's government. The intent is to assist the legitimate regional governments to become self-

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[31] McCollum, James K., "The CORDS Pacification Organization in Vietnam: A Civilian-Military Effort", **Armed Forces and Society**, Fall 1983, p 22.

sufficient, stable, and peaceful. This is only possible if the authority of the legitimate government is recognized and accepted by the people. U.S. agencies operating in the region cannot become the recognized or perceived authority within any host nation; otherwise the legitimacy of the host nation's government is undermined. The U.S. military should assist in the professional development of a host nation's military force, particularly its officers, while taking care not to assume its role.[32] This lesson was learned by the U.S. Marines and published in their **Small Wars Manual** in 1940.

Perseverance

The insurgent is willing to bide his time and so must the counterinsurgent. Since insurgency is a method of the weak or cautious, the insurgent will seek a series of small victories, minimizing the risk of a large defeat. The criteria for success in counterinsurgency are not as clearly defined as victory through defeat or destruction of an enemy main force. The lack of a credible military threat to the U.S. requires a criterion other than military victory. The criterion for success in counterinsurgency campaigns is **change,** which ironically is also the aim of the insurgent. This is an evolutionary, not revolutionary process that will be measured by lasting improvements in host nation stability, prosperity and respect for individual rights, rather than short-term battlefield victories. Perseverance won the peace in El Salvador, and perseverance is required to sustain the peace. Change comes slowly in countries with growing social problems and shrinking gross domestic products; bringing change about requires a long-term commitment to help, nurture and reinforce success.[33]

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[32] Joulwan, p. 9.

[33] Ibid., p. 9.

Restraint

The goal of success by political means demands the restricted use of force. Protection of political legitimacy and the will of the people (the friendly center of gravity) is impossible without it. Violence by the counterinsurgent force must be sufficient for the purpose, but never excessive.[34] A classic mistake in counterinsurgency is to escalate what should be essentially a police response to a military response. Armed forces are classically trained, organized, equipped and deployed to close with and destroy conventional enemy troop formations. Often, when the insurgent enemy is intermingled with the civilian populace, grievous excesses occur, including death or injury to innocents, which can polarize the military and the populace it is supposed to protect, causing a threat to the friendly center of gravity by their own actions. Civic action projects can bring the military and the populace together in a common cause, when the military aids the civilians in building needed schools, roads or other projects that will have a long term positive effect long after the military has left the area. The impact of this effort aids the friendly center of gravity.

OPERATIONAL DILEMMAS

Assistance, Reforms, and Leverage

The first tool that could be utilized when aiding our allies involved in an insurgency without inserting our own troops is the Security Assistance program. It focuses on the use of support to address the root causes of the problem facing the host nation. The responsibility of the Department of state and executed at either the CINC or the country team (MilGrp)

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[34] U S Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-5, **Airland Operations, A Concept for the Evolution of Airland Battle for the Strategic Army of the 1990s and Beyond,** Ft Monroe, Va., August 1991, p. 27.

level it consists of providing military equipment, training, and combat **trainers,** not advisers, to field units of the host nations' armed forces. Participants in the Security Assistance program include, but are not limited to: the host nation, State, Commerce, Treasury, Office of Management and Budget, CIA, Agency for International Development, and DOD.

Analysis of El Salvador and before that, Magsaysay's actions in the Philippines, indicate that the host governments' military forces often require major reorganization and widespread reform if the material and financial aid they receive is to be used advantageously rather than squandered in the field or siphoned off through corruption. U.S. attempts to retrain, reorganize and reform corresponding political and economic structures are usually confronted by entrenched and often corrupt (by American standards) bureaucracies with vested interests in maintaining the status quo. The linking principle governing the success of the overall reform is the amount of leverage that can be brought to bear upon the host nation. Vietnam showed that as long as the host nation's political elite and entrenched power structures believe that thwarting the insurgency is a paramount American interest, the U.S. will have very little leverage with which to force the reforms required for success. Paradoxically, as a general rule, the amount of leverage available to the U.S. is inversely proportional to the amount of resources it has committed to the struggle. The situation becomes worse of course if American blood is spilled by large numbers of combat troops.

Operational Objectives and Military Conditions to be Established

Given that the strategic aim is the destination to be reached by the campaign plan, the most difficult step is to define those military conditions or objectives that must be created and by their existence will provide the strategic aim. These conditions or military objectives

must flow from political objectives. The less predominant the military is in a conflict, the more difficult it will be to translate the strategic aims into the military conditions that must be established.

Time, Public Support and Sequencing

Time is the ally of the insurgent; the longer the insurgent survives, the stronger he grows. Meanwhile, as time drags on, the U.S. military position may be weakened by declining public and congressional support, impatience and "assistance" weariness at home. The U.S. center of gravity in counterinsurgency operations may be the maintenance of public support, the responsibility of the political arm of the U.S. government. However, it is difficult to portray the image of a war that is being won when it is non-linear, a war with no clearly defined front lines. There is no easy and simple map display for television viewers. This problem is all the more difficult because the common perception will be that government corruption led to the birth of the insurgency. The image that must be portrayed is that the war is worth fighting and that the money being expended is being uses wisely. We must be able to articulate to the American public through the press that the strategic aim of the campaign is not attainable by a single tactical action at a single place and time. The sequencing of a campaign plan by phases is a way of organizing the extended and dispersed activities of the campaign into more manageable parts.[35] Each phase should have a clearly understood intent of its own, generally aimed at some intermediate goal which contributes to the overall intent of the campaign. Phases should be event-oriented rather than time-

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[35] Department of the Navy, Headquarters U.S. Marine Corps, **Campaigning, FMFM 1-1**, Washington, D.C., 25 January 1990, p. 41.

oriented.[36] Each phase is related in cause and effect as an essential component of the counterinsurgency campaign.

[36] Ibid., p. 45.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

"To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."[37] Insurgent warfare presents a number of interwoven dilemmas which cause analytical and coordination difficulties to the campaign planner. The thought process necessary to translate strategy into operationally achievable objectives is the operational art. Sequencing the appropriate amount and range of U.S. military resources to accomplish the strategic aim demands the warrior's consummate skill.

In the fabled story of the six blind men and the elephant, all were partially right in their interpretations of what they experienced, and all were wrong in that none was able to describe an animal he had never seen. Looking at previous counterinsurgencies for guidance is a bit like the six blind men, for the most striking single characteristic of insurgencies is their dissimilarity.

The case studies of El Salvador and the Sendero Luminoso coupled with U.S. counterinsurgency experience codified in the Marine Corps **Small Wars Manual** furnish lessons to the operational planner.

Fundamental to accomplishing the strategic aim and achieving victory in counterinsurgency is the civilian-military interface. The operational commander must understand policy, policy-makers and the media. No commander can isolate himself today from technology and communications and their impact on his objectives and in the execution

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[37] Samuel B. Griffith, **Sun Tzu, The Art of War**, New York, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 77.

of his campaign plan. The U.S. can help friends help themselves most effectively when U.S. and host nation counterinsurgency principles and practices are in consonance and U.S. assistance suits the situation.

Campaign planning in counterinsurgency, primarily a military activity, must support the U.S. Embassy and country team in their efforts to support the host nation's national and military plan to resolve their internal conflict. Assistance to countries unwilling to reform rarely is wise. Desired results are always delayed and may be unobtainable. Patience is a prerequisite for success.

When in our national interests and while not "at war", the U.S. may commit elements of its national power to support legitimate democracies and thereby stabilize the affected region.[38] Campaign planning can provide a logical, rigorous, and coherent method for linking all elements of American power in pursuit of national interests in counterinsurgency.

[38] Joulwan, p. 6.

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